

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claim 10 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Kami (U.S.P. 5,890,740) and Claims 5, 6, 11 and 12-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Kami in view of Krieger (U.S.P. 4,223,899). Claims 5, 6 and 10-14 remain active.

Considering first then the rejection of Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Kami, it is to be noted that Claim 10 has now been amended so as to state that the connecting portion includes a rib portion defining a concavity and that the connecting portion includes a notch portion so as to have a decreased thickness wherein a longitudinal location of a vertex of the notch corresponds with the location of the rib portion of the connecting portion. These limitations are based upon the structure illustrated in the present application and as discussed, for example, at page 4, lines 15-19. Insofar as the notch illustrated in the Office Action fails to meet or teach the limitations noted above and in view of the importance of these limitations and the proper functioning of the present invention, it is submitted that Claim 10 patentably defines over Kami as well as the remaining references of record.

Next considering then the rejection of Claims 5, 6, 11 and 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Kami in view of Krieger, it is to be noted that Claim 5 has been amended to claim that the rib portions are spaced apart circumferentially with cavities formed therebetween and that the rib portions lie in the same plane as the flange portion, as illustrated in the present application. Insofar as a review of the illustration of Kami in the Office Action indicates that the rib (disclosed merely as being rubber blocks 10 in Kami) clearly are not taught as having spaced apart circumferential cavities formed between the rib

portions nor do such lie in the same plane as the flange portion as presently claimed. Similar limitations have also been added to Claim 6. Claims 11 and 12 have also been amended so as to claim that the connecting portion includes a rib portion defining a concavity and that the notch portion is defined so as to have a decreased thickness wherein a longitudinal location of the vertex of the notch corresponds with the location of the rib portion of the connecting portion as emphasized hereinabove with respect to Claim 10. Insofar as neither Kami nor Krieger teach or disclose the above-noted limitations and insofar as none of the remaining references of record teach or disclose these limitations, it is submitted that each of Claims 5, 6, 11 and 12-14 patentably define over such references.

In view of the foregoing, an early and favorable Office Action is believed to be in order and the same is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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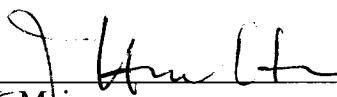
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